Replies to letters received from M. Ps.

391. SHRI O. P. KOHLI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the letters written by the M.Ps to the Minister of State for Defence are neither being acknowledged nor replied inspite of repeated reminders;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and what steps does the Prime Minister propose to take to ensure that the replies to the letters of the M. Ps. are not only replied promptly but spiritedly by the Minister of State;

(c) whether letters written to the Prime Minister and the Minister of State for Defence, if at all replied, are replied by the officials and not by the Minister; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and what concrete steps does the Prime Minister propose to take to ensure that the replies are sent under the signatures of the Minister of State only and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) and (b) As per the laid down procedure, letters addressed by Members of Parliament are replied to as soon as possible. If the information sought is not readily available, such letters are acknowledged pending a complete reply, because occasionally the collection of information from lower formations causes a slight delay.

(c) and (d) Although the Ministers addressed normally endeavour to reply personally to such letters, the laid down procedure permits a reply being sent from official levels. While hitherto the level prescribed was at least that of a Joint Secretary, henceforth the level of such reply would be that of Secretary.

Setting up of National Security Council

392. SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL:

SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any further steps for setting up of the National Security Council as assured during the Budget Session in the Rajya Sabha; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) and (b) The question of restructuring the National Security Council is under consideration of the Government.

Diversification in defence production

393. SHRIMATI CHANDRIKA ABHINANDAN JAIN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what percentage of the Defence Public Sector Undertakings Sales during 1993-94 were made to non-defence customers;

(b) whether it is a fact that the motivation for diversification in defence production units had not emerged from any down sizing of defence production;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the performance of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in the last three years in production of defence equipment to meet all requirements of the army?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) During the year 1993-94 about fifty percent of the total sales of defence public sector undertakings were to non-defence customers.

(b) and (c) The defence production units undertake diversification so as to raise turnover and productivity by utilising the spareable capacities and skills